Warm and Fuzzy in First Grade:

A management technique all students will love.

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Lemont Elementary
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Context:

The setting where I conducted my inquiry was in a first grade classroom at Lemont Elementary, in Room 11. The class consists of 19 students: 11 boys and 8 girls. The students range in age from six and seven years old. However, one student is eight years old, and is being tested for special education. I notice that he has a short attention span and needs more assistance in the classroom than the other students. There is one student with a behavior problem in my classroom, and he has a Therapeutic Support Staff (TSS) member with him for five hours of the day. He is a bright boy, but has emotional difficulties. The majority of the class is white-Caucasian, with one female who was adopted from Guatemala and one male who is Native American.

This class is challenging in terms of behavior. In fact, it is one of the most challenging classes my mentor, Donna Bryan, has ever had in her teaching career. Many students in the class act immature, due in part to the fact that six of them have birthdays later in the school year like May or June, which make them young for first graders. I can see a major difference in the students who are older and who are younger in age. The younger students are often calling out answers, and I feel that I am always talking over them.

Four students receive Title 1 reading, two females and two males. There are two female students who have worked with the learning enrichment teacher and are currently “book buddies.” They read stories to two Kindergarten students several times a week. The class has three “leaders,” five “followers,” four “teasers” and seven “pleasers.” I decided to categorize these students with these titles because the “leaders” are students who are more controlled and follow the classroom rules. The “followers” attempt to act
like the “leaders,” however, seem to misbehave and tend to have less control. The “teasers” are students who are the misbehaviors and often cause the majority of the calling out problems. The “pleasers” are students who very seldom call out and when they get in trouble they always apologize immediately, unlike the “teasers” who don’t seem to mind if they get in trouble. The “leaders” stand out as strong in the classroom. The students look up to them a lot. The “teasers” also stand out strong and a lot of classroom disruptions occur due to these students. The other students get distracted very easily from their outbursts.

**Wonderings and Questions:**

**What management techniques work best with my teaching style?**

**Sub-questions:**

- What techniques will help me to manage my students, while still allowing me to be an effective, fun teacher?
- What technique(s) will work best with my energetic first graders?
- What kinds of whole-class rewards work best and increase motivation to follow classroom rules?
- What do I do with a handful of students who misbehave while the others are engaged?

**Rationale:**

I conducted an inquiry on classroom management because I wanted to find the most effective way to manage my students, in a manner that best fits my teaching style.
Most of the time, the students have difficulty listening and following directions. They seem to call out answers more often than not, or talk to their neighbor when there is a lesson going on. I want to be a loving and fun teacher, but also have respect from my students. I do not want to be too strict, but tough enough so the students know I mean business. I feel this is important for me to do because if I don’t have successful classroom management, I will not get the importance of the lesson across to my students and I will spend more time trying to keep them quiet than teaching them. I want my students to be successful and I want them to remember me for being a good teacher, not for being a teacher that they can “walk all over.” Usually the behavior problems erupt when all of the students come together on the rug. The students all have very strong personalities and love to voice their opinions; rug time is a prime opportunity to express this. Finding a management technique that will help to control the entire class is a priority.

Data Collection:

**Warm Fuzzy Jar**

The data that I collected for this inquiry project included surveys, interviews, anecdotal records, and references from several Internet sites and books. The anecdotal records consisted of how the students behaved during the day. Each day, I recorded how the students behaved by the number of “fuzzies” they earned in the warm fuzzy jar, the focus of my inquiry project. A fuzzy is a token, which the students earn when they follow the Fuzzy Rules. A fuzzy could be a cotton ball or pom-poms found at a craft store. The warm fuzzy jar was introduced to me by my PDA, Susan Lunsford. She suggested I give the jar a try because it matched my fun personality. I first began my
fuzzy jar experience by allowing the students to achieve one fuzzy for the morning, before lunchtime, and one fuzzy for the afternoon, lunchtime through bus time. Also, to go along with the fuzzy jar, I had a set of six “Warm Fuzzy Rules” that the students had to follow in order to earn a fuzzy (Appendix 6). The class votes on a reward and then works to achieve a goal. The first goal that I set for the students to reach was 10 fuzzies. The first reward was the game “Battle Ball,” very similar to dodge ball. It took 15 days to reach the goal. I was concerned over the amount of time it took for the students to reach this goal. I conferenced with my mentor and PDA about this. We then came up with the idea that the students could receive a fuzzy anytime throughout the day, whenever they are following the Fuzzy Rules. The next goal that the students had to reach for the fuzzy jar was 25 fuzzies. They voted that their reward should be a popcorn party. As this goal was being reached, I introduced the use of a stopwatch to the class with the help of my mentor.

**Stopwatch**

I wore a stopwatch around my neck everyday, all day. Every time that the students did not follow the Fuzzy Rules, such as talking out, taking too long at transition time or not using good manners, I start the stopwatch. Usually, when I gave them a warning that I was going to start the stopwatch, they tended to settle down. However, there were times that the stopwatch had to start. When I start the stopwatch I do not stop it until the students calm down, are focused, and ready to begin the lesson. Whatever time is on the stopwatch by recess is how many seconds or minutes the class loses from recess. The most time the class lost was four and a half minutes and the least amount of
time they lost was 30 seconds. The stopwatch was a very powerful tool that became an integral part of my classroom management.

**Student Surveys**

The survey that I conducted was with my first grade class. The students were given a five-question survey in the morning when they arrived to school, or when there was some free time. The five-question survey dealt with the heart of my inquiry project, the warm fuzzy jar. The students were asked to circle a smile or a frown depending on if they agreed or disagreed with the questions surrounding the fuzzy jar. The survey helped me analyze the fuzzy jar more in-depth because the students’ feedback was very helpful. However, I noticed that some of the students, particularly the pleasers, would answer the questions the way they thought I wanted the survey to be answered, instead of honestly. Because of these responses, I was unable to reach a conclusion. However, the survey was a helpful piece of data collection and the majority of the students responded well.

**Interviews**

I am just entering the teaching profession; I am new to writing lessons, managing 19 students, and the inquiry process. Interviewing veteran teachers, and professionals in the education field was a valuable source in this process because I interviewed my mentor Donna Bryan, a second year, first-grade teacher from Lemont named, Rachelle Senior, and a second grade teacher from Lemont named Dottie Zembower. I asked them questions dealing with how they manage their classrooms currently and how they have managed their classrooms in the past. It was very interesting interviewing Dottie Zembower and Donna Bryan, who are veteran teachers compared to Rachelle Senior who
is in her second year of teaching. Rachelle Senior’s questions were much different from Dottie and Donna’s questions in that she had many interesting responses to my questions by she shared a lot of information from student teaching and from substitute teaching and the techniques currently used in her classroom; she has given me advice on how to use them in my future classroom. The questions that I asked Donna and Dottie were more along the lines of what they have done in the past in their classrooms.

**Quiet Worker Jar**

Another fun and effective technique that I introduced to my first graders was the Quiet Jar and Quiet Worker Jar. Helping my students to not talk out, and to listen while others were talking, are major challenges in Room 11. The Quiet Worker Jar is an empty clear jar located in the front of the classroom. Beside the jar is a basket full of blank cards. Every time my mentor, my Paraprofessional or I caught a student working quietly, we told him/her to, “Put your name in the quiet worker jar.” The student then wrote their name on one of the blank cards and put it in the jar. At the end of each week, on Friday, I picked a card out of the jar and whosoever name was on the card received a prize from the prize box. However, one problem happened when using this technique. For instance, when I caught a student working quietly, I asked him to put his name in the jar. Other students who were not asked to put their name in the Quiet Worker Jar often responded and told me, “I was being quiet!” When students told me this, I reminded them that they needed to be quiet and working in order to get into the jar, hence the name “Quiet Worker Jar.”

**Resources or Literature**

Some interesting texts and Internet sources that I found very helpful were
Yardsticks by Chip Wood and the article, Assertive Discipline: More Than Names on the Board and Marbles in a Jar by Lee Canter. The text by Wood connected me more with first grade children and helped me understand how they act and more importantly, how they are normally supposed to act. “Industrious” describes the overall behavior of children at six. Classrooms full of six-year-olds are busy, noisy, places. Talking, humming, whistling and bustling are the order of the day” (Wood p. 75). What Wood describes in the chapter devoted to six-year-olds or most first graders is completely true. Six-year-olds cannot sit still! By reading this chapter in Yardsticks, helped me to accept the fact that the way most of my students are behaving is normal.

However, some students take their “normal” behavior to the next level leading to issues in the classroom. Lee Canter’s article on the Internet struck me because his topic of the article, Assertive Discipline: More Than Names on the Board and Marbles in a Jar related directly to my inquiry. For my inquiry, most of my data dealt with a warm fuzzy jar and using students names. When I came across this article I thought I was doing it all wrong! However, Canter does explain that assertive discipline or managing a classroom is a more complex process than just putting marbles in a jar or writing names on a board by explaining that “master teachers teach their children to behave” (Canter). They establish clear rules for the classroom, they communicate those rules to the students, and they teach the students how to follow them and they praise every student at least once a day. Canter also explains that consistency is a key in managing a classroom and an effective plan is applied fairly to the entire classroom (Canter). This article by Canter was a very helpful source. It helped me to remember things that are easy to forget, including consistency and communicating the rules to my students, because many of
them are still learning how to read. This article has been an excellent source for my inquiry.

**Claims and Evidence:**

**Claim 1:** The Quiet Worker Jar proves to be an effective management technique that matches my teaching style.

**Evidence:** The Quiet Worker Jar was created at the beginning of the year for the class. The jar is an effective management technique because as I stated in my data collection section, when I noticed quiet workers I would ask students to put their name in the Quiet Worker Jar. When the students were asked to put their name in the jar, they were very excited to get out of their seat and put their name in the jar, in front of the rest of their peers. This made them feel special, making the other students strive to put their name in the Quiet Worker Jar. This technique matches my teaching style because it makes the students feel special when they get up in the front of the room to put their name in the jar. Making them feel special proves this technique is a part of my teaching style.

**Claim 2:** The Quiet Worker Jar proves to be an effective management technique at increasing the number of productive workers in my classroom.

**Evidence:** The Quiet Worker Jar is an excellent management technique in my classroom. The students who are in the Quiet Worker Jar have a chance at the end of each week to get their name drawn from the jar to win a prize from the prize box. I have noticed however, that the Quiet Worker Jar has increased the students’ work ethic a great deal since it was introduced. I will only ask a student to put their name in the Quiet Worker Jar if the student is quiet and working. During the third week of inquiry, it was
wonderful to see 26 names in the Quiet Worker Jar. That means that in five days, 26 names, some more than once, were added to the Quiet Worker Jar showing me that the students were engaged and working quietly. The Quiet Worker Jar is an excellent management technique to keep the students motivated and to work quietly.

Claim 3: The stopwatch technique was more effective than the warm fuzzy jar, however I do not consider it a part of my ideal teaching style.

Evidence: The evidence that supports this claim is found in my anecdotal records for the warm fuzzy jar (Appendix 3). I feel that the students responded better to the stopwatch method, as opposed to any other management technique that I tried.

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How the stopwatch technique worked was when the students started misbehaving or acting up I would start the stopwatch and once I noticed the class settle down, I stopped the stopwatch. For whatever time was on my stopwatch by recess that is how much time the class would lose. The students would respond very quickly to me when they would see me pick up the stopwatch, they would whisper around to their friends, “She’s getting
the stopwatch, be quiet!” Also, before beginning the stopwatch I would warn the students that I would be starting it or simply say, “I have started the stopwatch.” The children did not want to lose recess and would try their hardest to work together to not lose any. On the other hand, the fuzzy technique does work as well because before a lesson or if I notice they are acting up I will say, “Do you want to earn a fuzzy?” or “Are you following all of the fuzzy rules?” The fuzzies were not as an effect to the students because they weren’t losing anything, while with the stopwatch, losing recess was the consequence. Also, I believe the children enjoyed having the fuzzy jar in the room according to the survey that I conducted with the class (Appendix 5). According to the results from the survey most of the children circled a smile, meaning they agreed with the question, which is what I was mainly looking for. Going back to the stopwatch technique, I recorded how many minutes the students had to stay in for recess. It was very interesting to go back through and to look at how much time they got taken off for recess. I noticed that the time curved up and then dropped down, which was good. I feel that my students understood that there were times when it was not the time to talk and they were behaving more. I am “teaching them to behave” as Canter stated.

I also, recorded how many fuzzies the students earned and noticed what time of day they were better behaved and when during the week they were better behaved. According to my records, the students received a fuzzy everyday for lunch except for March 20 and April 2nd. At Lemont, the students eat lunch in their classroom and when I come back from lunch, the students are reading quietly and know not to talk.

In a conclusion, I believe that the stopwatch technique is working best for controlling behavior of my students, but it doesn’t fit my teaching style. They seem to
respond to it better and I notice them working very hard when they notice me reaching for the stopwatch. I also see the students helping others to make the right choice such as not talking or following the rules. I would rather avoid taking away privileges from students and I acknowledge that some parents and principals in my future may argue with my stopwatch technique of taking time off recess.

Claim 4: The frequency of opportunities to receive awards has a positive effect on classroom behavior.

Evidence: As stated earlier, when I first introduced the warm fuzzy jar to the class I had them try to earn 10 fuzzies. They could earn the fuzzies by getting one in the morning and getting one in the afternoon. As stated in my anecdotal records (Appendix 3), I started the fuzzy jar and the goal of 10 on a Monday, thinking that the students could earn the reward of Battle Ball by Friday of that same week. However, it took the students two weeks to receive their goal. After this happened, I conferenced with my mentor and PDA about how I could change this to make the fuzzy jar have a greater impact to Room 11 and my PDA suggested that I give my students a fuzzy for every time the students follow the rules. I changed the way the students could earn the fuzzies and it seemed to work much better. The students always questioned if they would get or have gotten a fuzzy for a certain activity. The students really seemed to care about the fuzzy jar now that they could earn fuzzies anytime throughout the day.

Claim 5: Students do not work harder to achieve one type of goal over another.

Evidence: For the warm fuzzy jar, I allowed the students to vote on a reward that they
would like to achieve after receiving x-number of fuzzies. However, I did not allow the students to recommend rewards, they must vote on two different choices that I gave them. For example, for the first reward, the students were able to choose between battle ball or ten extra minutes of recess and voted for battle ball. The students had to achieve 10 fuzzies and could earn these fuzzies, one for the morning and one for the afternoon, a total of 2 fuzzies a day. In a week, the students could have achieved this goal, however it took them two weeks to earn battle ball. When the students voted on a chocolate chip cookie party for their next prize it took them three weeks to earn the party. However, I changed the way the students could earn the fuzzies by they could earn a fuzzy every time they followed the rules allowing the students had to earn more than 10 fuzzies, they had to earn 20.

I feel it doesn’t really matter what the reward is for the students; it just depends on what the students in a particular class value as a reward. My students are very energetic and young, so it takes them longer to reach a goal than it would another class perhaps. This inquiry has taught me that in order to manage my students there is no right way, patience is the key and the students will mature into well-behaved young adults, with guidance hopefully!

**Reflection and Future Practice:**

What worked best for me during this inquiry experience was the stopwatch technique. My mentor introduced it to me and I am so thankful for it. I will definitely carry this technique with me in my future teaching and recommend it to fellow teachers in the future. Also, the fuzzy jar is another great technique, especially if I teach younger children. It is a cute and fun activity that gets the young children excited about behaving
well and earning a little fuzz-ball towards a reward in which the class votes on. I wonder what kinds of techniques I will use in my future classroom. What if I don’t get a primary classroom? What do I do?

I can look at the interview I had with Rachelle Senior because she was a permanent substitute in a fourth grade classroom and gave some great advice. How many of these techniques are really necessary? Do I need to use all of them or would one be sufficient with my first graders? My mentor and I talked about cutting back the techniques so that there aren’t so many to see how the students react, and this should be interesting. This was a fun and interesting project to conduct. I really learned a lot about myself and about my students. I found out useful information that I can use now and in my future! Hopefully, classroom management will be under control when I have a classroom of my own.
Appendix:

Appendix 1: Inquiry Brief:

Context in which you will be conducting the inquiry:

The setting where I will be conducting my inquiry is in my first grade classroom at Lemont Elementary in room 11. The class consists of 19 students, 11 boys and 8 girls. It is a challenging class in terms of behavior, one of the most challenging classes my mentor, Donna Bryan has ever had in her teacher career. The students in the class are more immature due to their ages. Many students in the class are young, being born later than some of the other students. I can see a major difference in the students who are older and who are younger in age. They are often calling out answers and I feel that I am always talking over them. Seven students receive Title I reading, however two students may test out of it shortly. There are two students who have worked with the learning enrichment teacher and they currently are “book buddies” with two Kindergarten students and read stories to them several times a week. One of the students that go to learning enrichment is very quiet and shy and the other is very outgoing, my mentor thought it would be good to put them together to help even them out. There is one student with a behavior problem in my classroom and he has a Therapeutic Support Staff (TSS) member with him for five hours of the day. He is a bright boy, but due to a tough family life, he has emotional difficulties.

Rationale: Why am I doing this?

I am doing an inquiry on classroom management because I want to find the most effective way to manage my students, the way that best fits my teaching style. Most of the time they want to do whatever they want and never listen and are always talking. They seem to call out answers more often than not or talk to their neighbor when there is a lesson going on. I want to be a loving, fun, teacher, but also have respect from my students. I don’t want to be too strict, but tough enough so the students know I mean business. I feel this is important for me to do because if I don’t have successful classroom management, I will not get the importance of the lesson across to them and I will spend more time trying to keep them quiet then teaching them. I want the education of my students to be successful and I want them to remember me for being a good teacher, not for being a teacher that they can “walk all over.” Usually the behavior problems erupt when all of the students come together on the rug. The students all have very strong personalities and love to voice their opinion, while on the rug is a prime time to express this. Finding a management technique that will help to control the entire class would be excellent.

Wondering: What's My Style? Which classroom management style works best for me for managing my very energetic first graders?
Sub-questions:

- What techniques will allow me to gain respect from my students, but still be an effective, fun teacher?
  
  Data Collection: Interviews with other teachers

- What kind of technique(s) work best with my energetic first graders that they will take seriously?
  
  Data Collection: Class surveys with students, behavior charts and anecdotal record of warm and fuzzy jar.

- What kinds of rewards work best if they were given to the class and would they strive to achieve them?
  
  Data Collection: Class surveys with the students

- What do I do with a handful of students who misbehave while the others are being attentive?
  
  Data Collection: Interviews with other teachers

Projected Timeline:

Started Monday, Feb. 4, 2008 with introducing the warm fuzzies jar.

Week of Feb. 11, 2008: will post the rules in order to receive a warm fuzzy in the front of the classroom and read them aloud each morning after the pledge. Also, this week I will begin a “Kindness Circle” at the end of the day at bus time to settle bus time down and to share kind gestures from other students.

Week of Feb. 18, 2008: Hopefully, the students will receive the goal of 10 warm fuzzies of the week of Feb. 11th and get their reward of Battle Ball in the gym. This week I will up the goal from 10 to 20 fuzzies and have a new reward for the students to achieve. Also, I will not just put a fuzzy in for AM or PM, I will put a fuzzy in for anytime that they students are being good, making the goal easier to reach.

Week of Feb. 25: 2008: Conduct a survey with the class and interview Rachelle Senior and Jen Conklin.

Week of March 3, 2008: Make a new goal of 25 fuzzies and new reward. Also, I will interview Dottie Zembower and talk to Donna and Susan about management techniques.

Week of March 10, 2008: SPRING BREAK

Week of March 17, 2008: Conduct another survey with the class about their classroom behavior. Also, I will add a behavior chart to each student’s desk. The behavior chart will allow me to stamp on the chart everyone the student is behaving correctly. Once the students receive X number of stamps on their chart they will pick a prize out of the prize box.
Week of March 24, 2008: Start full-time teaching and evaluate strategies used so far.

Week of April 1, 2008: Meet with Donna and/or Susan and discuss any changes or how my inquiry is going.

Week of April 7, 2008: Write the inquiry draft.

Week of April 14, 2008: Revise inquiry draft.


**Data Collection Ideas:**

Interview Rachelle Senior (First grade teacher, Lemont Elementary)
- Have you ever seen anyone use a warm fuzzies jar before?
- In your student teaching/guest teaching experiences what kinds of classroom management ideas have you seen?
- Have you used a specific classroom management technique? If so, how did it work?

Interview Jen Conklin (kindergarten teacher, Lemont Elementary)
- How was your class last year (my current first graders) with behavior?
- What are some of your management techniques, being a kindergarten teacher?
- Do you recommend anything specific for a specific student(s) in my class that you had last year?

Interview Dottie Zembower (Second grade teacher, Lemont Elementary)
- I noticed you use a lot of music and movement in your classroom, how does this work and how do you not lose control of the students when doing these fun activities?
- What management techniques have you used in the past and how have they worked?
- I notice you have a strong, fun, friendly relationship with your students. I feel I am like that, how do you keep it fun, but also have discipline and respect from your students?

Rachelle Senior has a classroom management book I will borrow (have yet to get due to snow days)

*Yardsticks* by Chip Wood

*Principles of Classroom Management* by Nolan and Levin

Take class surveys on how and when they would behave better
• I will ask the students surveys in which they will answer with a smile, a frown or a straight face. This will show me what they enjoy and don’t enjoy and what they feel so-so about.
• I will ask them questions about how they feel when other students talk out in class, when other students don’t keep their hands to their selves, when students aren’t being a good friend, etc.
• These surveys will be asked about the rules for achieving a “warm fuzzy.”
• I will ask these students these types of surveys about three times before the conference too see if any feelings have changed.

Interview Donna Bryan (mentor) and Susan Lunsford (PDA):
• Ask about how my management techniques are working and if I should improve or change anything.
• Talk about ideas of new management techniques and what they think about them.

Anecdotal record of warm and fuzzy jar

Behavior charts on each individual student’s desks: I will stamp the chart every time they behave well and when they reach a certain goal they can receive a prize from the prize box.

Donna Bryan’s daughter’s book from Lock Haven University

Look online for resources

Appendix 2: Annotated Bibliography:

Bryan, Donna. Personal interview. 8 April 2008.
  1. How are my management techniques working and do you have any suggestions for improvement?
  2. What have you used in the past to make the children behave better in the classroom? Is taking away recess the only answer?

This website makes me think about my classroom management technique of using a warm fuzzies jar. Canter believes that writing names on the board and putting marbles in a jar is not as affective as consistency and a positive attitude. However, these techniques could work for some, while other classrooms need a little more like a warm fuzzy jar to meet a goal.
This website gives many tips and scenarios that may help a teacher understand how to deal with certain students. It gives dialogue clues that could help the teacher figure out a student and guide them along with meaningful conversations. This website relates to my inquiry by giving me ideas on how to deal with students who are always talking out or don’t like to follow the rules.

This website is wonderful. It has tons of links to lead you to any answers you may have about classroom management or about your classroom. It even has a link about working with a Para-Professional. It gives many tips to use to hopefully change the behavior of your students. This site relates to my inquiry because it helps answer questions I may have about classroom management and tips to turn my students around and to follow the rules.

This website gives teachers many ideas to use in the classroom to catch the well-behaved children being good. This will hopefully make the other students see that they need to adjust their behavior. It gives many examples of what to do and how to use this technique in the classroom. Also, some ideas give alternative ideas that may work better for your particular classroom. It is a great site to check out.

This is an excellent text to refer to with any questions dealing with classroom management. Actual examples of students with behavior problems are used in this text and describe how the teacher deals with them. It is very helpful and the examples can relate to any child in your classroom.
Senior, Rachelle. Personal interview. 25 Feb. 2008. I did not conduct the interview, however the questions that I will ask are:
1. Have you ever seen anyone use a warm fuzzies jar before?
2. In your student teaching/guest teaching experiences what kinds of classroom management ideas have you seen?
3. Have you used a specific classroom management technique? If so, how did it work?

Steele, Kimberly. "Ideas for Many Areas of Classroom Management." Kim's Korner for Teacher Talk. 2 Sept. 2007. 12 Feb. 2008 <http://www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/classroommanagement/menu.html>. This is an excellent and easy to use website! A teacher created it and has dozens of links to click on to help you through the school day or through the entire year! There are games available, books for sale and even tips on how to teach reading and math better. This is an excellent website to use beyond looking for classroom management advice. This site will help me with my inquiry by giving me new tips to use and different techniques.


Zembower, Dottie. Personal interview. 3 Mar. 2008. I did not conduct the interview yet, however the questions that I will ask are:
1. I noticed you use a lot of music and movement in your classroom. How does this work and how do you not lose control of the students when doing these fun activities?
2. What management techniques have you used in the past and how have they worked?
3. I notice you have a strong, fun, friendly relationship with your students. I feel I am like that, how do you keep it fun, but also have discipline and respect from your students?
Interviews with Veteran Teachers (Appendix 3):

Rachelle Senior (first grade teacher, Lemont Elementary)

- Have you ever seen anyone use a warm fuzzies jar before?

“No I have not. I have seen a jar where the teacher will put the student’s name in it where the student has done something good or was kind to a friend. I have seen a marble jar and a cotton ball jar where as a whole class they work together to get x number of cotton balls for an activity. They work together to get a reward. Never take any out. When the jar was filled voted on a prize. Ex. PJ, snacks” – Rachelle Senior 4/10/08

- In your student teaching/guest teaching experiences what kinds of classroom management ideas have you seen?

“When I student taught in 4th grade my teacher put a check mark on the board when they were misbehaving. Worked well with transitions. Every check mark was work 1 minute of recess, owed me back that time that they wasted. Caught on quickly when they saw they were about to get a check mark. My cooperating teacher did this so I did it to keep the flow. Only did in fourth grade. Last year, got from 3rd grade, made a poster with note cards with each students name on it, wrote what they did wrong and sent home note card every Friday (didn’t like this, like stop light better b/c I feel I was being too nit-picky focusing on the negative no positive) I now send random e-mail when something is wrong. Student teaching-made a circle to look like a pizza, every time good earned a slice of pizza for the pie and when pie was filled got a party-never got the party.” – Rachelle Senior 4/10/08

- Have you used a specific classroom management technique? If so, how did it work?

“Last year I had 3 tickets I gave my first graders on Mon. if they forgot to put their name on their homework they owed me a ticket, they could earn good tickets someone good in between transitions other kids would catch on to that. At the end of the week would put tickets in a bag and draw three tickets from the bag and winners would win a prize. Sometimes “Super Fridays” would pull 5 tickets. One year had class where students didn’t respond well to tickets. Used in 4th grade worked great (used during long term sub). Have a stop light on the front board. With student’s names on the magnets everyone is off the light, green is warning, yellow 5 min. off recess, red we call home immediately w/ student, go see Dr. Farmer each week send home a report on how each student did. Parent doesn’t have to sign it. Last year had a student with outbursts, made a binder organized it by schedule of day (too much for him) and could earn a smile or
frown, than made a way to earn 3 goals, made goals together and if made all 3 goals a day got a sticker and got something at home from parents. Talking to the students is good; helping them make choices, help them to understand what they did. Always ask the kids if they think it is fair.” –Rachelle Senior 4/10/08

Donna Bryan (first grade teacher, Lemont Elementary, mentor)

• How are my management techniques working? Have any suggestions for improvement?

“You have a better presence with the kids since the beginning of the year. They see you more as the teacher now, which makes a difference in management. Your management techniques are better and have improved since the beginning of the year.
Suggestions: Be more consistent, stop and wait; don’t go any further until they are quiet and ready to go on. Do not respond to kids who call out, everyone does it. It’s easy, when a kid gives you a right answer you want to respond. Give them non-verbal clues such as raise your hand. Preface the question with, “I am going to ask you to raise your hand…” Don’t ask them if they want to do something or if they liked something.” –Donna Bryan 4/7/08

• What have you used in the past to make the children behave better in the classroom? Is taking away recess the only answer?

“I have used the cards, positive-extra recess, negative-taking away recess. I have also done with the cards, starting on red and earning their way to green. Phone calls home and Dr. Farmer. Gone through IST (Instructional Support Team) and had them removed to the principal. Taking away recess is not the only answer.
Cards: There is a chart in the back of the room for each student with their number on it. The students know their number. The number is given to them by how they are arranged alphabetically. When a student is misbehaving we give them a warning and if they misbehave again we ask them to change their card. Their cards are arranged in a pocket starting with green, to yellow, to blue to red. The green is the best color to be showing, green means good. When the card is changed to yellow, it means they have misbehaved and a note will be sent home to their parents. When it changes to blue a phone call will be called home to mom or dad and when changed to red, Dr. Farmer, the Lemont principal will have the student in their office and they will talk about the situation.” –Donna Bryan 4/7/08

Dottie Zembower, Second Grade Teacher, Lemont Elementary

• I noticed you use a lot of music and movement in your classroom. How does this work and how do you not lose control of the students when doing
these fun activities?

“I explain to them that it’s as important as math and reading and whatever and even though it looks like fun its important and they have to know its exercising not recess. I’ll tell them that if they don’t want to do it they can do it with her at recess. Gives starts for participating in exercising. For example, if 2 boys didn’t participate the whole class didn’t do it class wouldn’t get a star. Boys do it later. Part of their day!” –Dottie Zembower 4/11/08

• What management techniques have you used in the past and how have they worked?

“I have been using stars for 10 years, they don’t know stars are for discipline. I don’t do parties; I just try to encourage them to earn stars. I have different symbols on board to help with place value and helps with behavior.” –Dottie Zembower 4/11/08

• I notice you have a strong, fun, friendly relationship with your students. I feel I am like that, how do you keep it fun, but also have discipline and respect from your students?

“Stars, write kids names down on a piece of paper that is hidden, get a tally by name if get 5 tallies-whole recess. One student has a special chart because very chatty, notebook for 1 behavior, two chances 1 for AM 1 for PM. Very simplistic, if good sticker and star, know what working on. Cant work on many get very confused. 1 tally=warning Have to find what works. Comments on Mr. O’Neil, (other second grade teacher in Lemont) male presence, doesn’t like jar and parties have to find what works for you. Mr. O doesn’t do anything has great discipline.” –Dottie Zembower 4/11/08
Student Survey (Appendix 5):

Name: ____________________________________________________

How Do You Like the Warm Fuzzies Jar?

Please circle the ☺ if you AGREE with the question or the ☹ if you DISAGREE with the question.
*Numbers under face indicate number of votes from the class.

1. Do you enjoy having a warm fuzzies jar in room 11?
   ☺ ☹
   18 1

2. Does the jar make you work harder during the day?
   ☺ ☹
   16 4

3. How do you feel when the class gets a fuzzy?
   ☺ ☹
   19 0

4. Do you remember all of the fuzzy rules during the day?
   ☺ ☹
   15 4

5. Do you help other students to make a better choice to get a fuzzy?
   ☺ ☹
   14 15